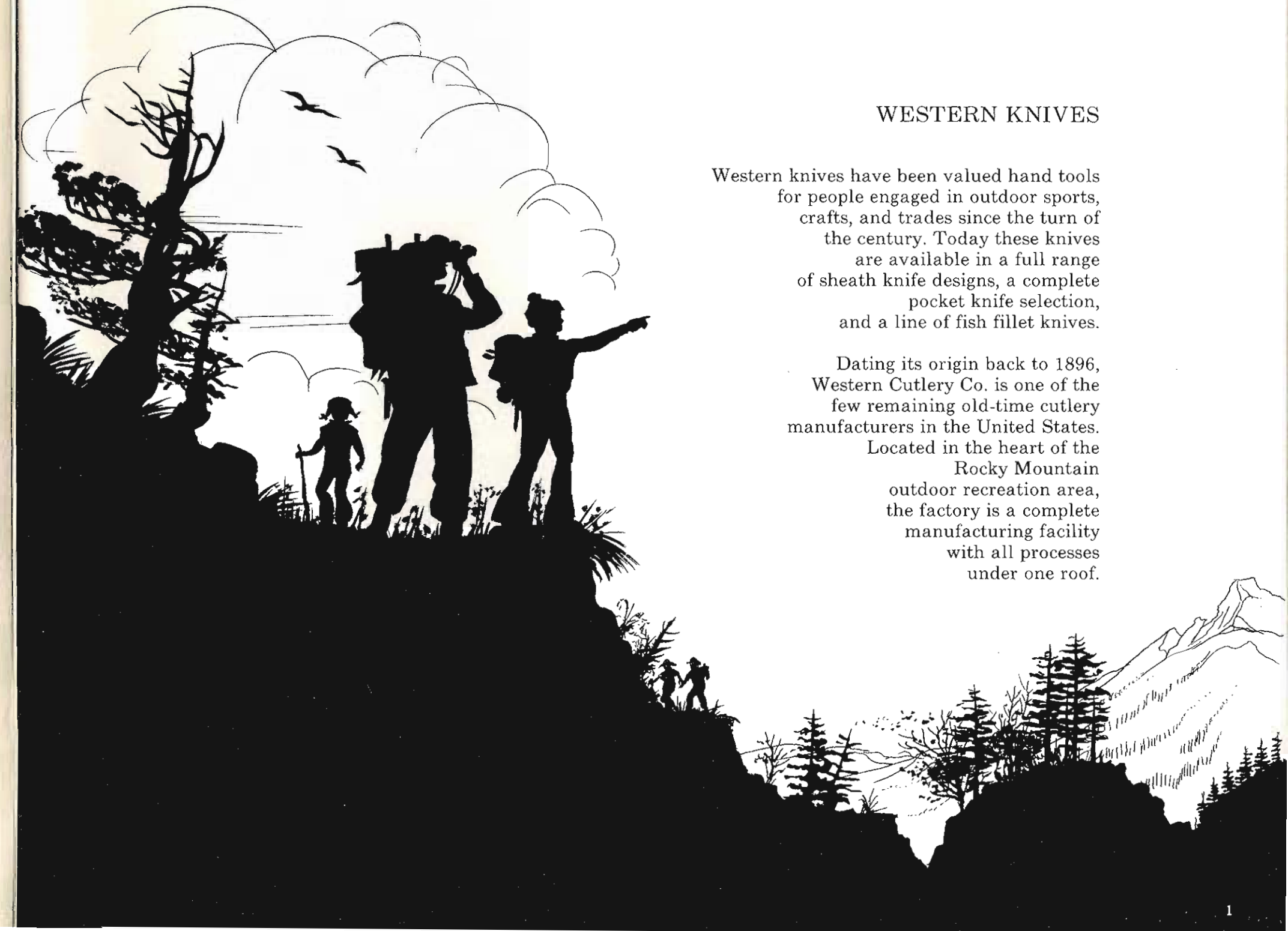
WESTERN KNIVES

and KNIFE NOSTALGIA

$2.95

An assortment of Western knives being prepared for display.



WESTERN KNIVES

Western knives have been valued hand tools for people engaged in outdoor sports, crafts, and trades since the turn of the century. Today these knives are available in a full range of sheath knife designs, a complete pocket knife selection, and a line of fish fillet knives.

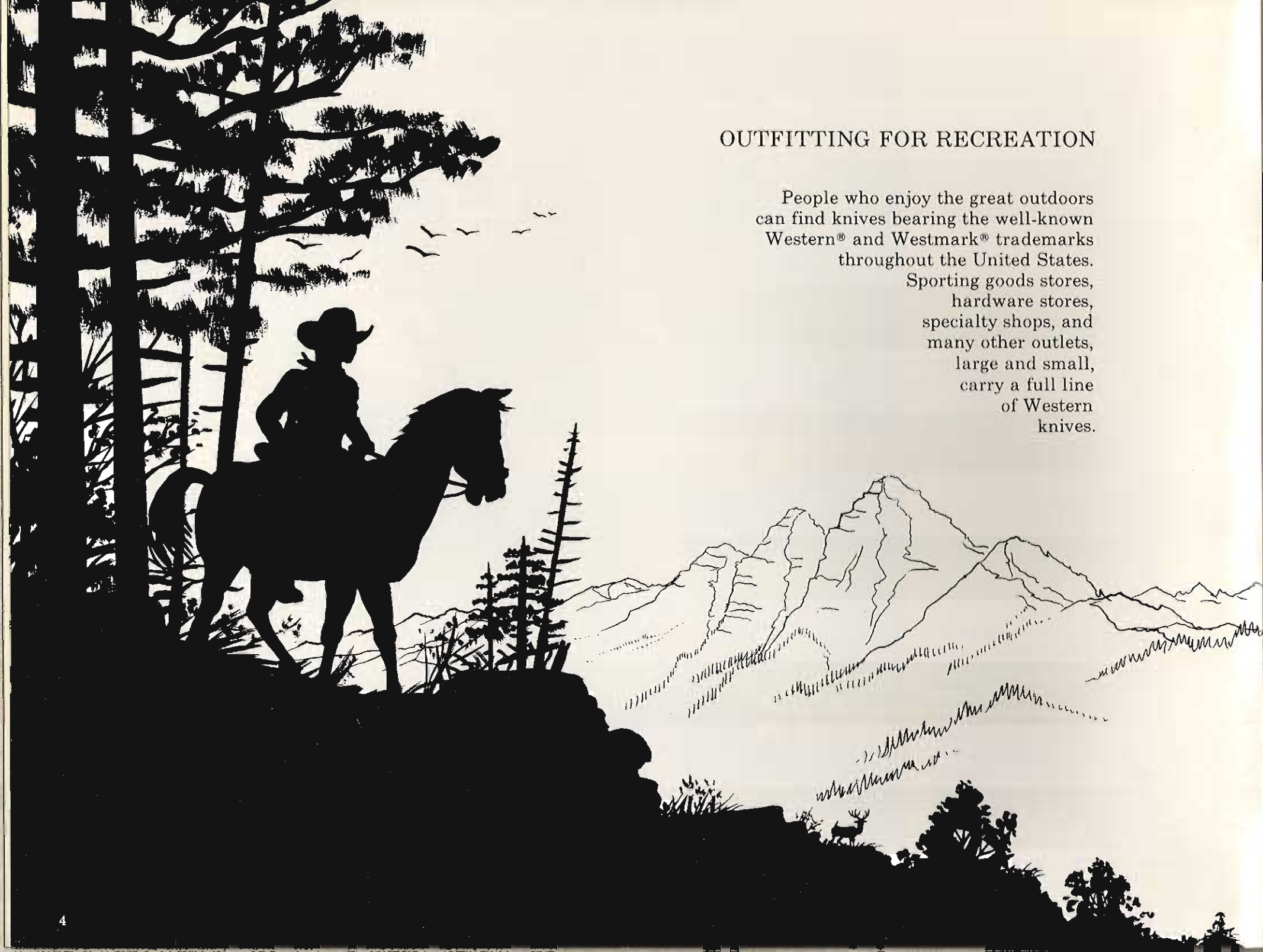
Dating its origin back to 1896, Western Cutlery Co. is one of the few remaining old-time cutlery manufacturers in the United States. Located in the heart of the Rocky Mountain outdoor recreation area, the factory is a complete manufacturing facility with all processes under one roof.

KNIVES IN EVERYDAY LIFE

The knife is one of man's oldest and most basic hand tools. Probably beginning as a piece of flint with a sharp edge, the knife has evolved into many different types and styles, with uses just as varied. Even in this age of space travel and nuclear energy, knives remain essential hand tools. Although most familiar to us as kitchen cutlery, they are still an integral part of our recreation pastimes and our hobbies, crafts, and trades.

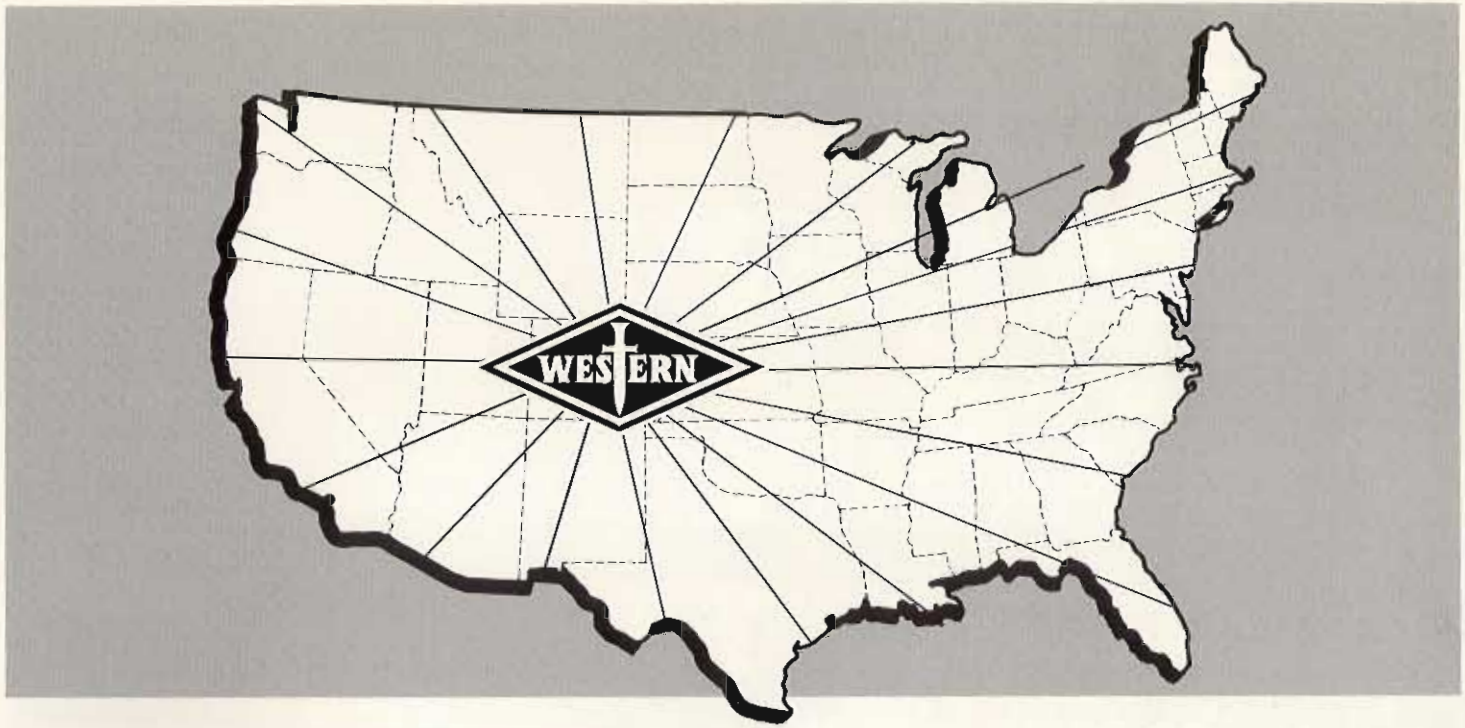
ESSENTIAL USES

Every day almost everyone uses some sort of sharp-edged cutting tool for something — eating, working, shaving, cooking, fishing, camping, or just plain whittling. Electricians, ranchers, carpenters, roofers, farmers, carpet and tile layers all need knives to earn a living. Using a knife is as common a part of our life as reading a newspaper or magazine. Many other tools are just as essential, and just as often taken for granted; but a cutting tool is probably used more frequently and more routinely in everyday living than any other.



OUTFITTING FOR RECREATION

People who enjoy the great outdoors can find knives bearing the well-known Western® and Westmark® trademarks throughout the United States. Sporting goods stores, hardware stores, specialty shops, and many other outlets, large and small, carry a full line of Western knives.



CONVENIENT LOCATION

Western's central location expedites shipment to all market points with a minimum of transit time and expense. Sales representatives cover the entire country, and exhibits of Western knives attract interest at several of the leading trade and consumer shows each year.

MERCHANDISING DISPLAYS

Outdoor knives come in many different shapes, sizes, and styles. A good assortment, well displayed, is necessary to help the customer find the right knife. Western Cutlery provides a complete selection of displays, from large glass-front floor cases to small point-of-purchase counter displays.

INDIVIDUAL PACKAGING

Each product comes individually packaged in an attractive box complete with product information and stock number for easy identification.

CARING FOR YOUR KNIFE

A good knife will give many years
of satisfactory service
if it is treated reasonably.
Like any quality product
it should receive
proper care.

STEEL PARTS

The most important thing to remember is that moisture is an enemy of any steel. Storing a knife in a wet sheath or a damp place is asking for corrosion. Keep steel parts clean and apply a light coat of oil or wax as necessary. Although stainless cutlery steel is more corrosion resistant than other cutlery steels, it too should be given proper care. Rinse or wipe a blade after exposure to salt water or citrus fruits.

MOVING PARTS

Keep moving parts free of dirt. Occasionally put a few drops of oil on pocket knife blade joints to avoid excessive wear and to keep all the blades operating smoothly.

BRASS AND NICKEL SILVER

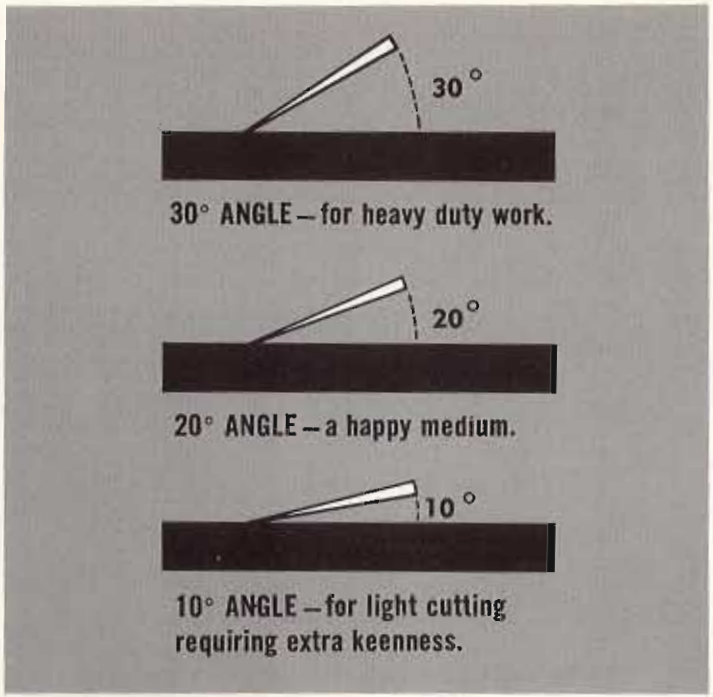
Some of the parts of knife handles are made of brass and nickel silver which may tarnish. Occasional rubbing with a buffing cloth will help maintain the high polish.

LEATHER

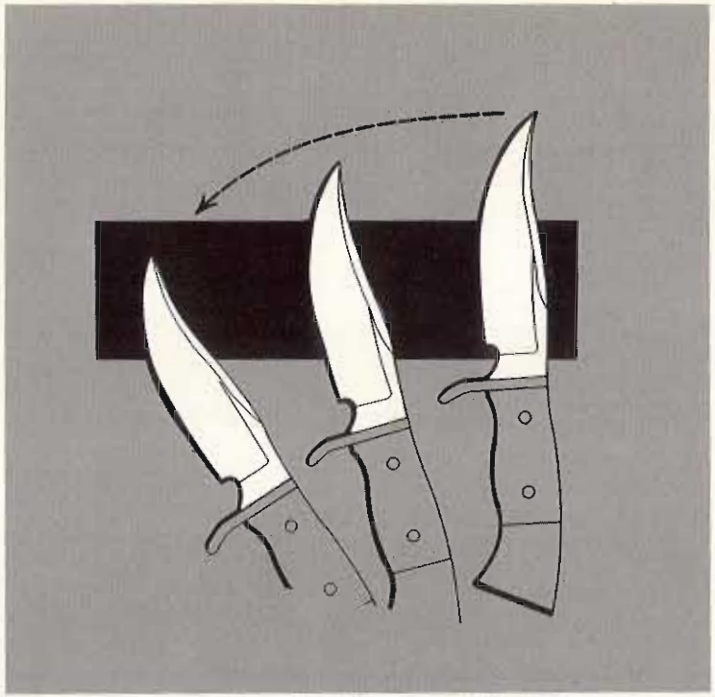
A light coat of neutral paste wax or leather polish is recommended to protect leather parts.

CAREFUL KNIFE USE

Use your knife safely and reasonably. A fine knife is designed for cutting and should never be used for prying or pounding. Do not hammer on a knife. Never throw a knife that is not specifically designed and constructed as a throwing knife. When finished using a knife close the blades or put it in its sheath.



Honing angle is important — never lay flat.



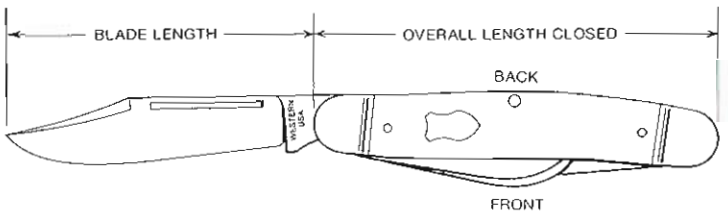
Draw the blade edge first while sliding it across the stone.

SHARPENING

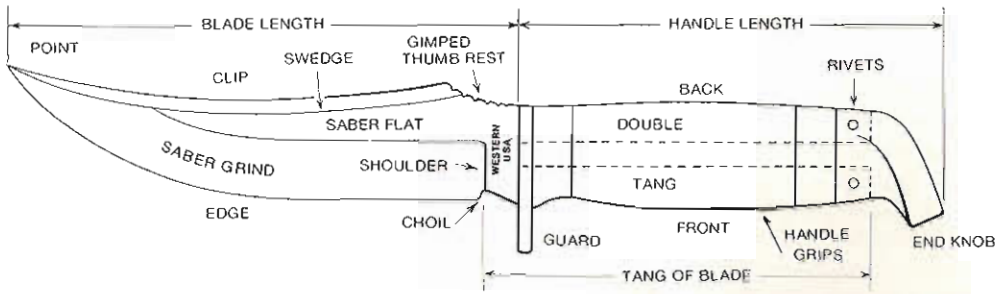
There are many different ways to sharpen a knife. Here are some general suggestions to help you keep your knife sharp:

- Use a good medium-fine stone, moistened with light oil.
- Never lay blade flat against stone. A 20-degree angle makes a good all-around edge.
- Be sure to maintain the same honing angle during all strokes.
- Draw the blade EDGE FIRST while sliding it across the stone.
- Repeat several times, counting your strokes. Then turn the blade over and hone the other side with an equal number of strokes.
- PRESSURE is important. Start with heavy pressure strokes and finish with light.
- For extra keenness, strop on leather.
- Be patient!. . . . Sharpening a knife takes time and practice.

POCKET KNIFE MEASUREMENTS

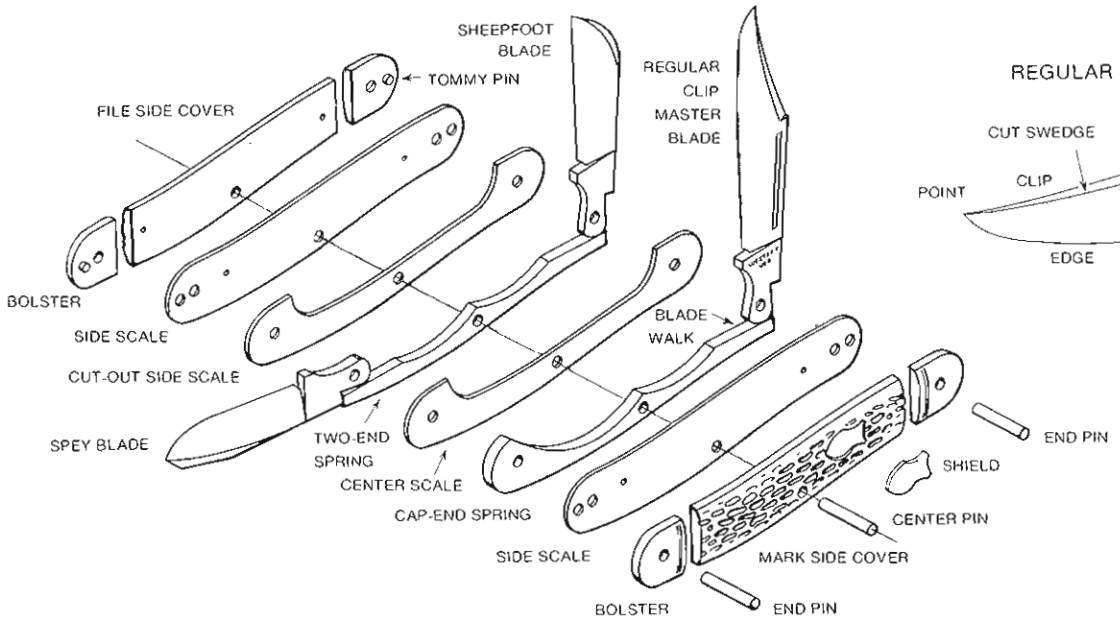


SHEATH KNIFE MEASUREMENTS

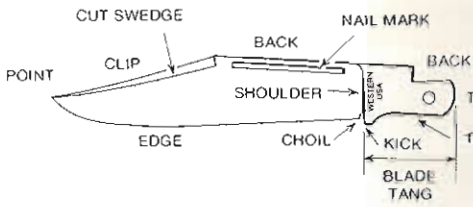


SHEATH KNIFE
(MARK SIDE)

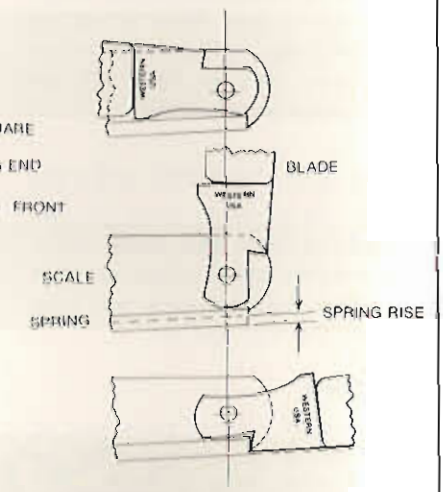
3 BLADE STOCKMAN'S POCKET KNIFE



REGULAR CLIP MASTER BLADE



BLADE AND SPRING ACTION



NOTE On all measurements allow dimensional tolerances for hand work

NOTE: All terminology is as used by Western Cutlery. Most terms and spellings are traditional in the knife industry and may not be found in dictionaries

	BY	DATE	WESTERN CUTLERY CO.	
ORIG.	K.M.P.	9/21/75	5311 WESTERN AVENUE	BOULDER, COLORADO, U.S.A.
REV'D			This drawing and all the information shown are the exclusive property of Western Cutlery Co.	ITEM KNIFE COMPONENTS

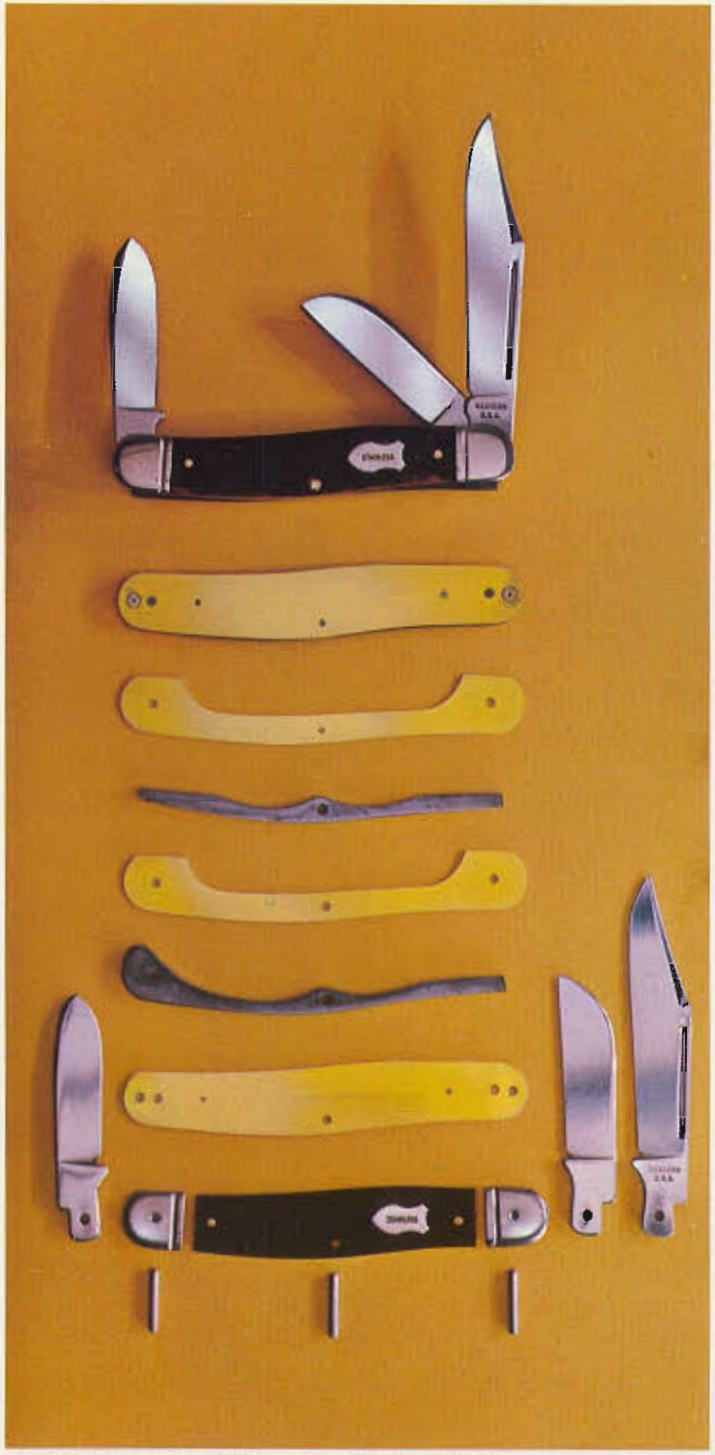
KNIFE COMPONENTS

POCKET KNIVES

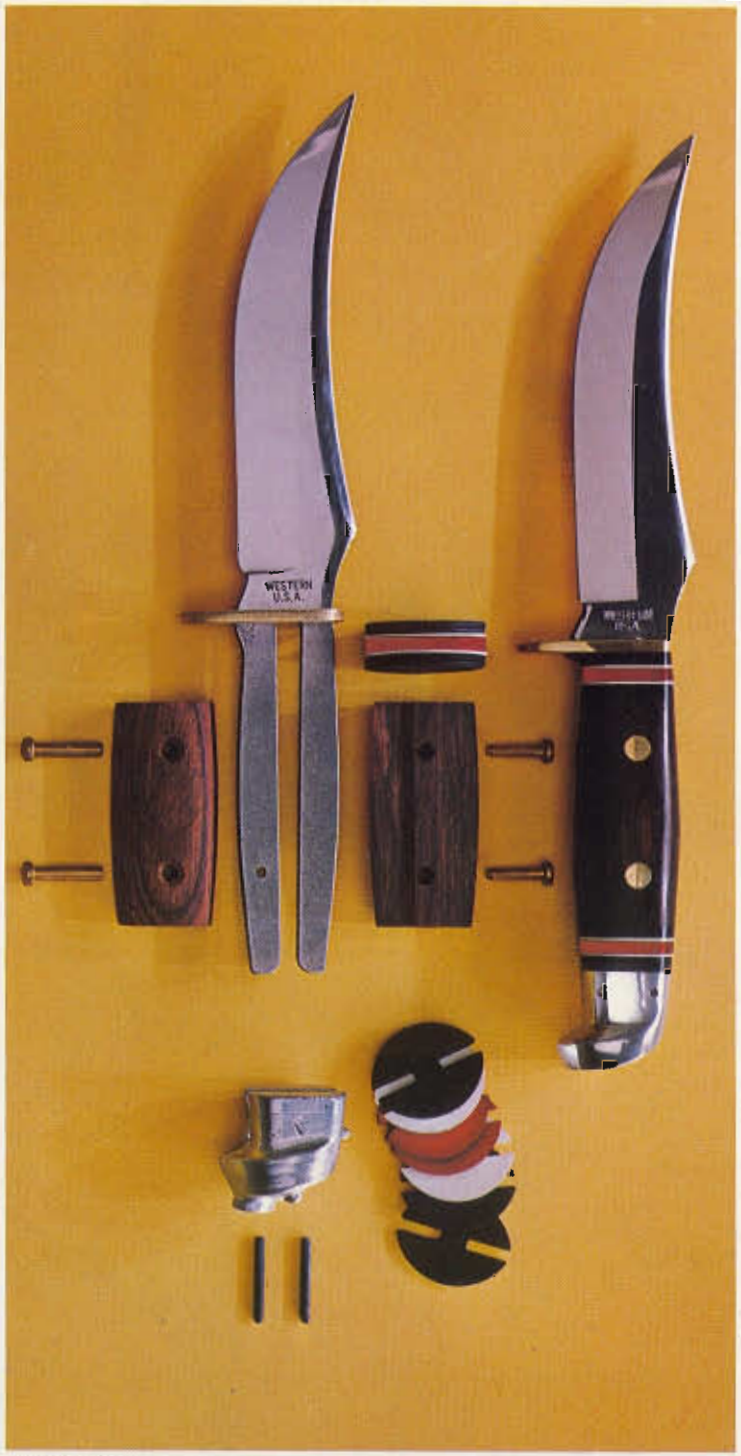
The Western knife illustrated here is a three blade stockman's pocket knife. The blades and springs are stainless steel; the scales, cover rivets, and center rivets are solid brass; the bolsters, end-rivets, and shield are nickel silver; and the covers are acetal resin stag. Over one hundred and fifty separate operations are required to make this pocket knife.

SHEATH KNIVES

The Western sheath knife shown here has a blade of chrome vanadium steel, handle rivets and guard of solid brass, a cast aluminum end-knob with two iron pins, decorative handle washers made of vulcanized fibre, and handle grips of resin-impregnated hard wood. A Western exclusive is the double-tang handle construction. Compared to the single-tang handle, the double-tang design is more durable and better balanced. The handle cannot become loose because the parts are locked between the two tangs and the end-knob is doubly secured with a rivet pin in each tang.



Pocket knife and component parts, shown half size.



Sheath knife and component parts, shown half size.

Part of the press room with double row of small presses for light stamping and piercing.

INSIDE THE WESTERN PLANT

PARTS PRODUCTION

Knife making begins in a large, well lighted press room where mechanical presses ranging from 22 to 400 tons capacity make the hundreds of different component parts. Some presses are hand fed, whereas others are fed from coils of raw materials and operated continuously at high speed.

Each year these presses process many tons of steel, brass and nickel silver as well as large amounts of aluminum strip, vulcanized fibre, and many types of wire.

The hundreds of different parts in the extensive product line require many different pieces of special tooling for each part. Experienced in-plant tool and die makers build and maintain this tooling in a modern, fully equipped tool and die shop.

MATERIALS

Many years of knife-making experience underlie the selection of raw materials. Western uses only those materials which have proved to be the best.

Several types of special-analysis, electric-furnace, alloy steels — including both stainless steel and chrome vanadium steel — are used for blades. These steels are made to Western's own specifications by outstanding American steel mills.

Only the finest brass and nickel silver are used. The scrap from these valuable materials is directly recycled by returning it to the mill in truck-load lots to be reprocessed.

QUALITY CONTROL

Quality control inspections use a variety of precision instruments to maintain the necessary accuracy in parts production.

Knives begin as sheets and coils of steel, brass, and nickel silver.

A 90-ton press with automatic feed cuts knife blanks from steel strip.

A 400-ton mechanical press has replaced the drop hammers of the past.

Inspecting enlarged image of part with optical comparator.

Quenching: Heated knife blades become hard steel when plunged into special oil bath.

HEAT TREATMENT DEPARTMENT

MAKING STEEL HARD AND TOUGH

Cutlery grade alloy steels have the natural properties of becoming hard and tough through processes known as heat treatment. For centuries heat treatment was a mystery that inspired many myths, but today it is a well understood science.

Western Cutlery carefully selects the best temperatures and treatments for each type of steel used. The temperatures required are accurately and continuously monitored to keep them within close heat limits so that the final product meets Western's high standards. Skilled personnel perform quality inspections — including tests for hardness, bending, and breaking — on samples at each step in heat treatment.

All Western pocket knife blades, sheath knife blades, and pocket knife springs receive a complete heat treatment in this in-plant facility.

A TWO-STEP PROCESS

HARDENING

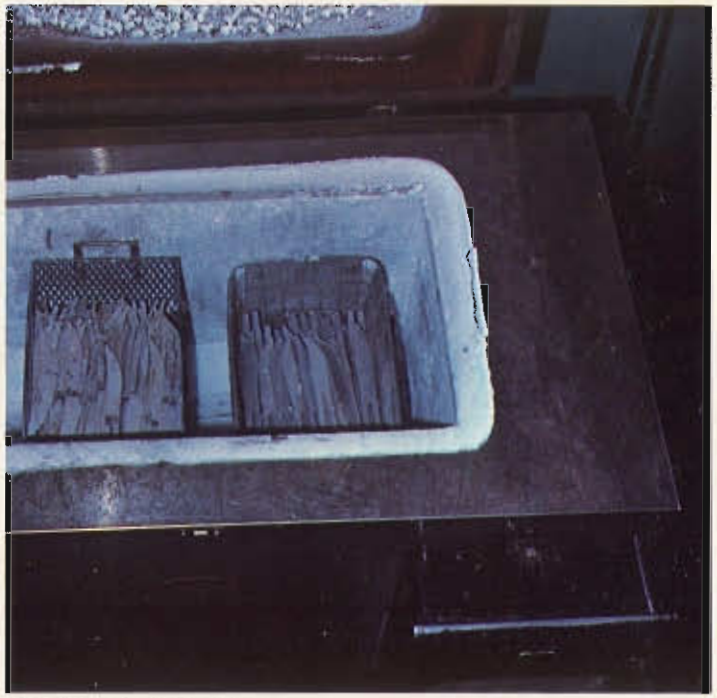
Hardening is the first step in the heat treatment of a knife blade. Blades are heated to a very high temperature, at which important changes take place in the microstructure. Then they are immediately quenched in a special oil. In this condition the blades are very hard, but very brittle. In addition, the blades made from some steel alloys then receive a deep-freeze treatment to complete their quenching transformation.

TEMPERING

Tempering, or toughening, is the next operation. Toughness enables a blade to resist breaking or chipping. Tempering is often called drawing, because it draws out the brittleness. During this phase blades are heated again, but only to a medium high temperature and then slowly returned to room temperature. Careful tempering gives a blade great toughness with only a slight reduction in hardness.

Western blades have just the right combination of toughness and hardness to provide a long-lasting blade that will take and hold a truly sharp edge.

Hardening: Blades at high temperature leave furnace for oil quench.



Freezing: Hardened blades frozen to minus 125° F.

Tempering: Loading electric furnace with pot of hardened blades.

Quality control: One of many tests is measurement of Rockwell hardness.

A portion of the grinding machine line.

Grinding machines are set up in pairs.

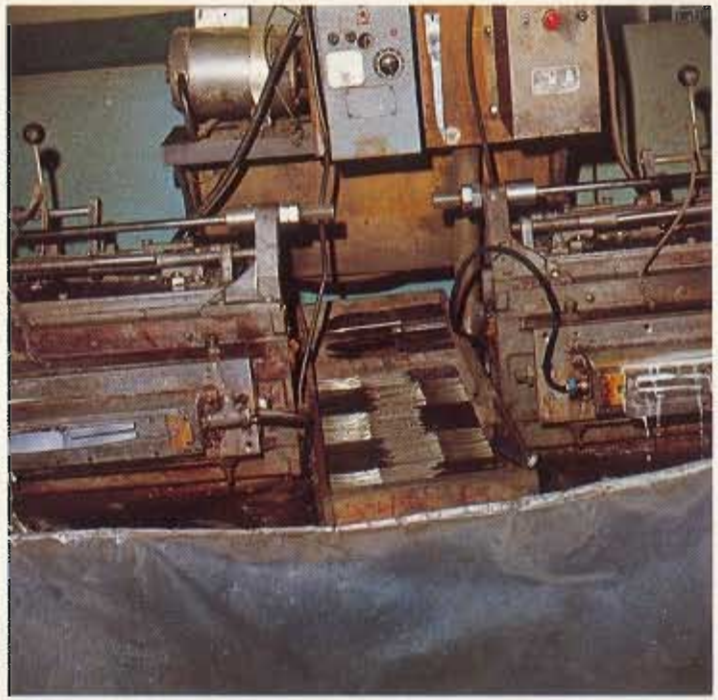
GRINDING AND POLISHING OPERATIONS

SHAPING THE BLADES

Grinding is a process in which abrasive wheels shape and contour the rough blank into a knife blade. Every pocket knife blade and every sheath knife blade receives a separate grinding operation on each surface.

MACHINE GRINDING

Since grinding is basic to the manufacture of knives, rows of automatic, cam-controlled, precision grinding machines are the heart of a modern cutlery factory. They speed the routine cutting away of metal required to get the blades ready for hand work. The grinding machines are set up in pairs so that when one side of a blade is ground the operator merely switches the blade to the other machine and the opposite side receives a matching grind. Grinding is done under a circulating stream of special liquid that keeps the blade cool and washes away the metal removed.



The left and right-hand carriages of a pair of grinders.

Knife blades ready for finishing and polishing.

HAND GRINDING

Although machines make the first heavy grinds on a blade, skilled hand grinders have an important role in producing Western knives. Each grinder uses one hand to press the blade against the wet grindstone which rotates away from him. At the same time the other hand sets the angle and draws the blade across the stone. Hand grinding requires steady, trained hands, and a "feel" for the work.

POLISHING

After grinding, the blades pass through several different polishing operations to complete the surface finish.

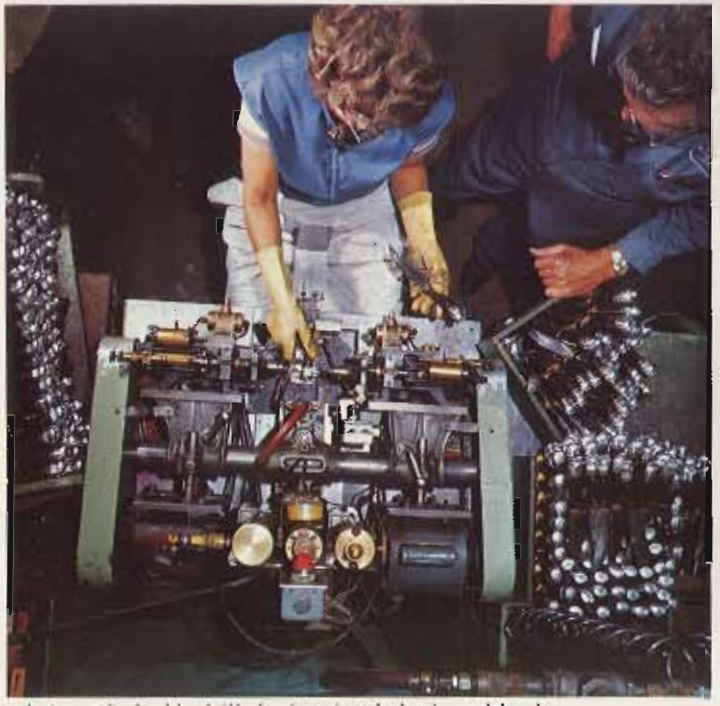
The old skill of free-hand grinding on large-diameter stones is still an important part of crafting fine knives.

Casting aluminum end-knobs.

Fitting handle on tang end of blade.

SHEATH KNIVES

End-knobs complete handle assembly.



Automatic double drills boring rivet holes in end-knobs.

ASSEMBLY

After grinding and polishing, blades are ready for handle assembly. The brass guard goes on first, and is followed by washers of fibre, brass or aluminum, and then handle grips of hardwood or other material, and finally a matching set of washers. Completing the handle is the aluminum end-knob which is riveted in place.

END-KNOBS

An example of the self-sufficiency of Western Cutlery is the in-plant aluminum foundry where the aluminum end-knobs are cast.

HAFTING

The next operation for assembled knives is *hafting.* "Hafting" is a word carried over from the Sheffield cutlers and derived from the old English word "haft" meaning handle. Hafting is shaping and smoothing the handle.

BUFFING

Separate buffing operations polish the blade, the guard, the end-knob, and handle. Different types of buffing wheels give the final bright or satin finish.

HONING

Honing the blade edge lightly on an extra fine wheel gives it its finished sharpness.

CLEANING & INSPECTING

The buff cake, greases, and oils that were so necessary during manufacture must now be removed and replaced with a protective coating of clear wax. This is the time for a final, careful inspection before the knife is packaged.

Hafting line, where knife handles are shaped on coated abrasive belts.

Shaping each handle individually.

Dressing pocket knife parts on a grindstone.

Drilling pocket knife scales and covers.

Adjusting pocket knife blades to "walk and talk."

Shaping and polishing pocket knives.

POCKET KNIVES

ASSEMBLY

After the blades and springs have been hardened, tempered, ground and polished and the many component parts finished to size and shape, assembly begins. This process, which requires a combination of many skills, is done by hand at individual benches.

MAKING POCKET KNIFE BLADES "WALK AND TALK"

Each blade must be adjusted to open and close properly, or as the old time expression describes it — "walk and talk." When a blade on a pocket knife is opened or closed, the tang end slides or "walks" along the end of the spring, causing the spring to flex. This part of the spring is called, naturally enough, the "blade walk." As the blade snaps open or closed there is a click, and this is called the "talk."

HAFTING AND BUFFING

After a pocket knife is assembled and all the moving parts adjusted the final shaping and polishing is done on special belts and wheels. Every surface receives separate operations.

HONING, CLEANING, AND INSPECTING

Hand honing each blade is one of the last of over one hundred and fifty operations required to hand craft each Western pocket knife. Then comes the cleaning, inspecting, and a final protective coating of clear wax.

Final cleaning and inspection of pocket knives.

LEATHER DEPARTMENT

Cutting sheath parts from steer hide on a "clicker" machine.

Sewing sheath parts together.

SHEATH PRODUCTION

Fixed-blade knives and some folding knives are provided with a leather sheath — and Western makes its own. This assures control of sheath design and quality as well as supply. All leather is carefully selected and must be specially tanned.

Western Cutlery has originated and pioneered many functional sheath designs that are now standard in the knife industry.

PLANT SAFETY

Western Cutlery emphasizes safety in all factory operations. An important part of the safety program is keeping work areas clean and orderly.

A dust collection system piped throughout the plant automatically cleans the air.

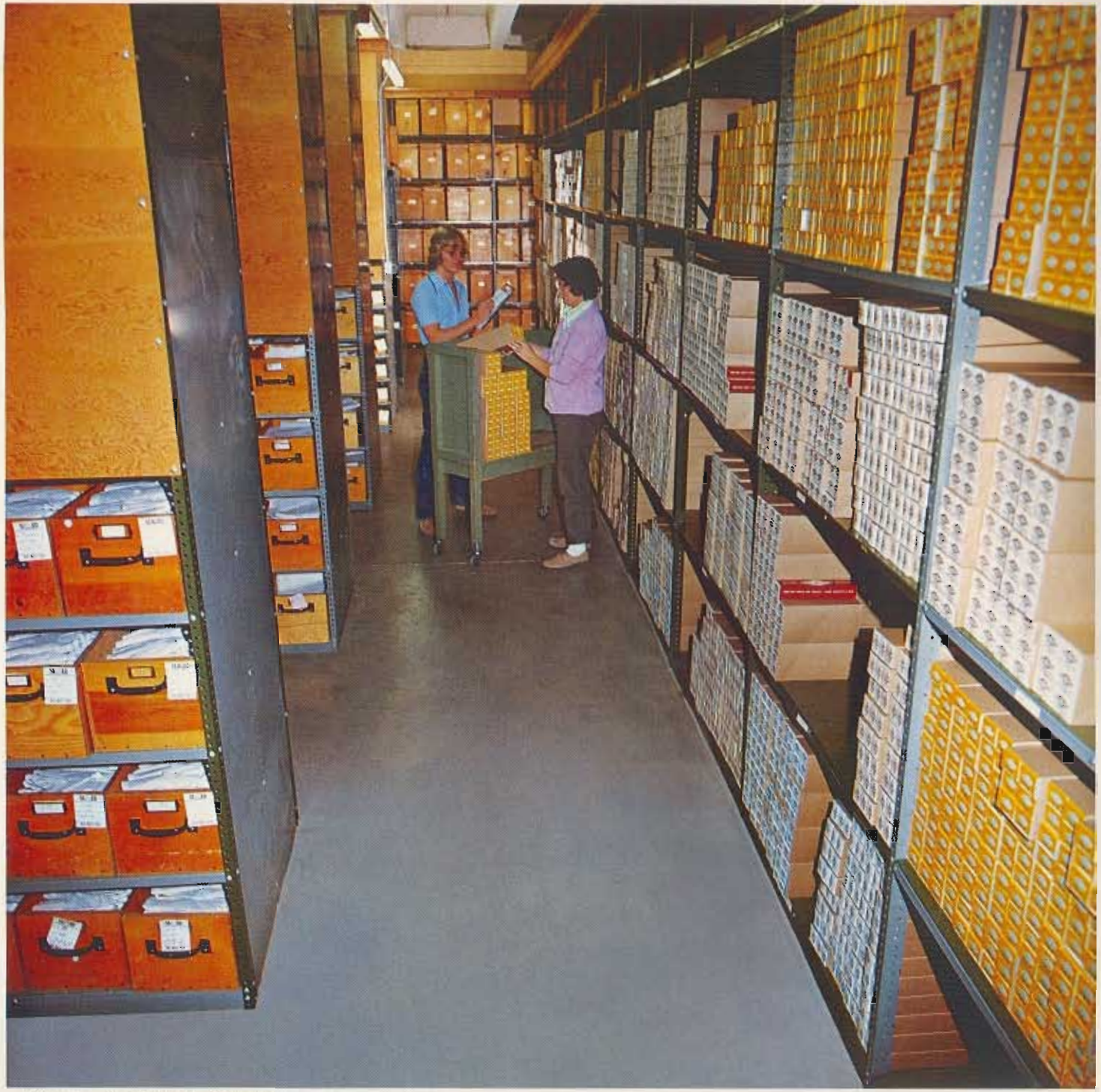
Western Cutlery stresses plant safety and cleanliness.

Cyclone air cleaners power dust collection system.

CABINET MAKING

The wood shop is an integral part of the overall operation. It produces merchandise display cabinets in all sizes and shapes from small counter fixtures to large floor cases. Display plaques and other accessory items are also made here.

The wood shop produces all types of display cases.



Filling a customer's order from shelf stock.

CUSTOMER SERVICES

STOCKROOM

To service promptly the thousands of display units sold throughout the country, Western Cutlery maintains an adequate stock of each item it manufactures. A large stockroom houses an inventory of finished goods from which orders of all sizes are shipped.

Shipping room prepares a shipment of floor display cases.

Computerized accounting machine aids efficiency.

SHIPPING

A large spacious room, plenty of open floor space, and big tables make it easy to handle customers' largest and smallest orders. Double checking each shipment assures accuracy.

OFFICE

The latest in modern office equipment is used to process the Cutlery's paper work efficiently.

Making knives requires paper work too.

LINKS WITH THE PAST

Western Cutlery adopts new production methods wherever efficiency can be improved without sacrificing quality. However, for many production operations on a quality knife there are still no substitutes for the skilled, hand methods of the past. The photographs on this page, covering almost eighty years in three different locations show how the factories have changed, but many of the same hand skills are still used to put that "badge of quality" into fine knives.

Hand grinding at C. Platts & Sons Cutlery Co., Eldred, Pennsylvania, in the 1890's.

Hand grinding at Western States Cutlery & Mfg. Co., 12th & Marine, Boulder, Colorado in the 1920's.

Knife Nostalgia™

Sheffield to Northfield

Old knives fascinate many individuals because they represent a connection with the people and times of years gone by. Knives of the past often make a person wonder about the old-time knife makers and the factories in which these cutlers worked.

One of the old-time cutlers was a craftsman named Charles W. Platts. Born in Sheffield, England, in 1838, he started at an early age to learn the trade of cutler, which he thoroughly mastered in all of its intricate branches. His father had also been an expert knife maker, as his ancestors were before him. Records of the old Sheffield knife makers of hundreds of years ago are still in existence, and they list the members of the old guild system that strictly regulated the apprenticeship and standards of the Sheffield cutlers. Many men with the name Platts are listed in guild records of the 1800's, the 1700's, and as far back as the 1600's.

Charles Platts worked at his trade in Sheffield until he was prepared to take a superintendent's position, at which time he decided to emigrate to America. Arriving in 1866 he accepted the position of superintendent of the Northfield Knife Co. in Northfield, Connecticut. He and his wife Sarah raised five sons, all of whom worked in the Northfield factory and learned the trade of knife making under their father's direction. He supervised the Northfield factory for over a quarter of a century, until about 1894, when he moved to Little Valley, New York.

The old Northfield Knife Co. buildings on Knife Shop Road are gone now. Office entrance can be seen on the left. Building on right with eight chimneys was the forge shop.

Stream side of Northfield factory. Plant was run by water power.

One of the fine knives made at Northfield Knife Co. (shown actual size.)

Charles W. Platts, born in 1838 in Sheffield, England, immigrated to America in 1866. Whiskers like these were called "Piccadilly Sweeps."

Platts knives 1896-1911

One of the attractions of old knives is the fact that these simple, durable hand tools often outlast many other products in our modern "throw-it-away" society. It was long ago when the people on these two pages made knives, but some of the knives they made are still in use today, or survive as valued items in knife collections.

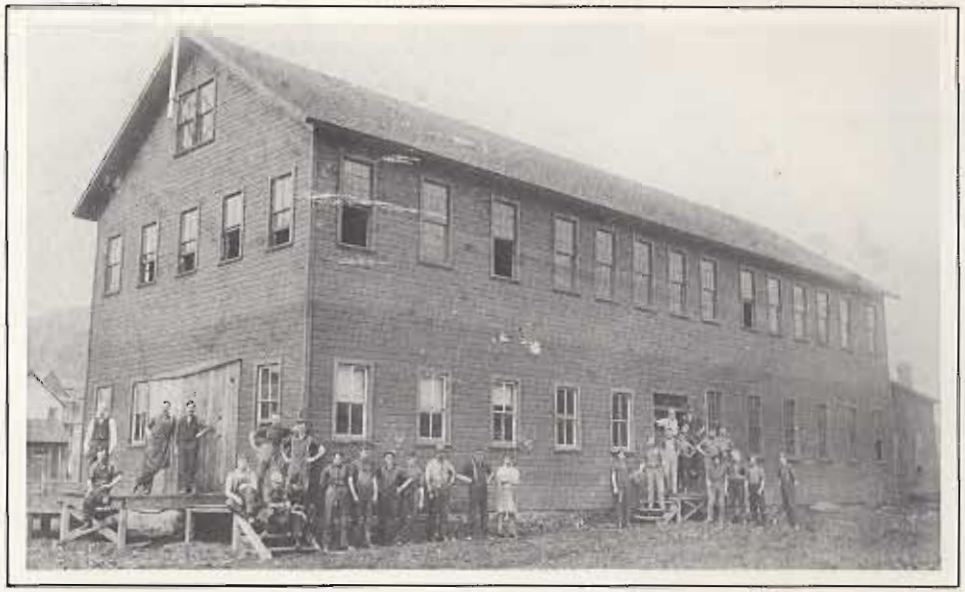
Most collectors try to obtain at least one pocket knife with a "Platts" brand stamped into the blade-tang. The first knives made in the United States with a Platts brand were made by C. Platts and Sons Cutlery Co., Gowanda, New York, in 1896. The company was founded by Charles W. Platts, who brought together his five sons to establish their own knife factory.

The Platts family had moved from Northfield, Connecticut, to Little Valley, New York, in the early 1890's. The first to settle there was H. N. Platts, the second eldest son. Already an experienced knife maker, he became foreman of the grinding and finishing department in a local cutlery factory. A few years after his arrival in Little Valley, his father moved there to be superintendent of a cutlery plant — probably the same factory where his son was employed.

When the father and sons decided to start their own factory in 1896, they found a building available in the nearby village of Gowanda, and there began the manufacture of pocket knives with their Platts brand. The Platts knives won immediate acceptance and soon the operation had outgrown its quarters in Gowanda, making a move necessary. This short period of production makes a C. Platts & Sons knife marked Gowanda, New York, a rare collectors item today.

Shipping Room. C. Platts and Sons Cutlery Co., late 1890's, Eldred, Pennsylvania.

One of the first Platts knives made in U.S.A. was this model No. 6237. (Photo actual size.)



C. Platts and Sons Cutlery Co., late 1890's, in Eldred, Pa. Building has narrow width to get maximum use of natural light. Engine fueled by natural gas powered entire plant through system of line shafts and belts. This was the same type of system that the water wheel powered at Northfield. Engine and drop hammers were in the forge room on the far right. Office entrance on left facing Platts Street.

Joe and Ray Platts in the office at C. Platts and Sons Cutlery Co., Eldred, Pa., late 1890's.

1896-1911 (Continued)

In 1897 Charles Platts and his sons moved into a new, larger building in Eldred, Pennsylvania. The move was successful and the business prospered. Most of the knives produced were pocket knives, which were sold throughout the country. Three years later the father died, and the company's name and trademark were shortened to "C. Platts' Sons."

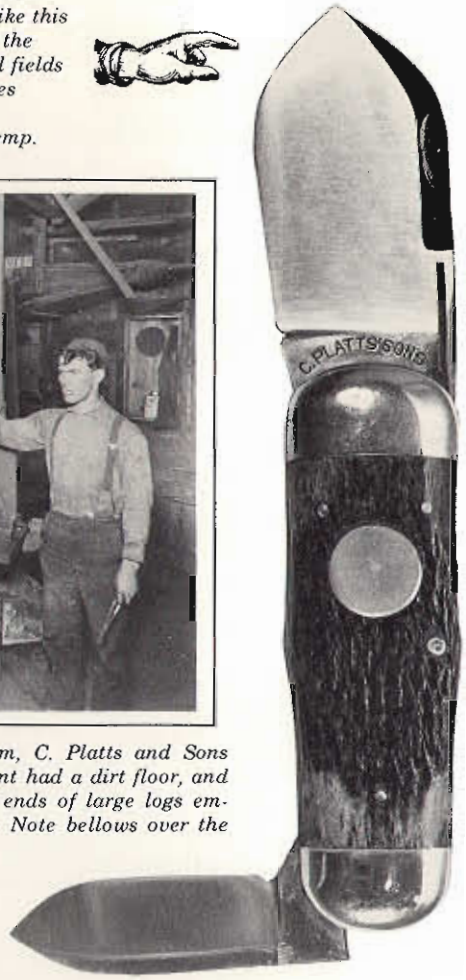
In 1905, H. N. Platts arranged the purchase of his four brothers' shares in C. Platts Sons' Cutlery Co. The Platts knife factory ceased operations in Eldred that same year, when H. N. Platts moved the entire operation to Bradford, Pennsylvania, where he combined it with his in-laws' knife business. In the Bradford operation H. N. Platts was one of the principal stockholders and was in charge of all manufacturing until 1911, when he sold his interest in the company and moved to Colorado.

In 1907 three brothers of H. N. Platts — Charles Jr., Joe, and Frank — established a knife factory, the Platts Bros. Cutlery Co., in Andover, New York. Knives with the Platts Bros. brand were made in this factory until about 1911, when the ownership of the factory changed.

Advertisement in Eldred publication in the early 1900's.

Charles Platts and his son H. N. Platts at the Eldred factory in 1890's.

Platts knife made at Eldred shown two-thirds size. Rugged knives like this were popular in the Pennsylvania oil fields where heavy lines on drilling rigs were made of hemp.



Drop hammer in forge room, C. Platts and Sons Cutlery Co. This part of plant had a dirt floor, and drop hammers were set on ends of large logs embedded deep in the ground. Note bellows over the head of man on right.

Platts Bros. Cutlery Co. Fourth of July float in Andover, N.Y. Platts Bros. factory in background. Building was similar to Eldred factory but with hipped roof.

Western States Knives 1911-1940

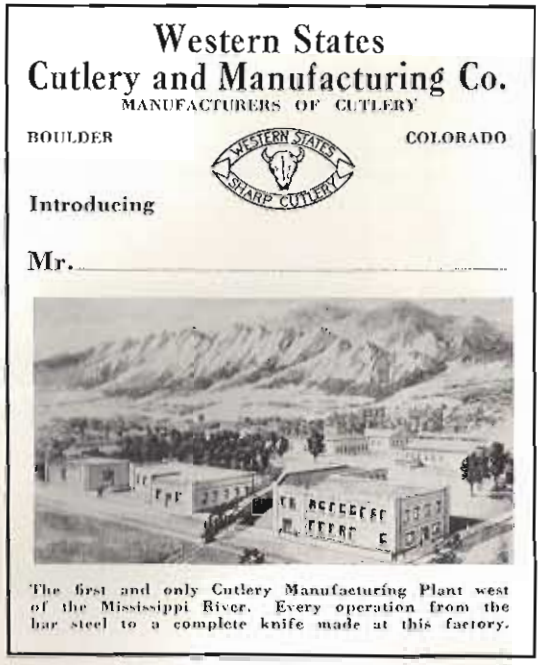
Old knives marked with old brands take on a special sentiment as the years go by. Who can part with such an old friend as the pocket knife given by a grandfather, or the sheath knife from an early camping trip? For many persons these first knives are the beginning of a full collection.

A well-known brand among knife collectors is "Western States," which was first used shortly after H. N. Platts moved West in 1911 from Bradford, Pennsylvania. There was a great demand for good pocket knives for ranchers, miners, farmers, and cowboys in the developing western states; and a factory near the customers was a logical idea. Platts was 45 years old when he established his cutlery company in Boulder, Colorado. He chose for his trade-mark the words "Western States" and "Sharp Cutlery." Between these words was a drawing of an old buffalo skull similar to the thousands of sun-whitened buffalo skulls that littered the plains at the turn of the century.

Knives with the Western States brand were manufactured in a two-story brick building which the company constructed at 12th (later Broadway) and Marine Streets. Boulder was then a town of about 9,000 people and "the Cutlery" was one of Boulder's earliest manufacturing plants. As the business grew, another building was constructed on the site and additions were made to the original building. In the beginning, H. N. Platts brought to Boulder some of the experienced craftsmen who had worked for him in the East. These men became the nucleus of the skilled work force he established.

Buffalo trademark was used extensively in early days.

H. N. Platts, founder of Western States Cutlery and Manufacturing Company.



One side of picture postcard used by salesmen.

"West building" of Western States Cutlery in the 1920's viewed from Marine Street. Factory operations were divided between two buildings because a railroad line crossed the site.

WEST BLDG.

and

EAST BLDG.

"East building" of Western States Cutlery in the 1920's viewed from Marine Street. The original building is the two-story section on the extreme right painted "Manufacturers of Cutlery." Note buffalo trademark above double doors of shipping room.

1911-1940 (Continued)

Pocket knives were the main Western States product line until about 1930, when the company brought out a complete line of sheath knives. These first sheath knives were distinguished by their double tang handle design which Western States developed and patented. The first of these new knives had aluminum end-knobs with a symmetrical shape similar to other knives of the time as illustrated by Western States knife No. L44. A few years later Western States designed a new end-knob shape (No. L49), which become an accepted design throughout the knife industry.

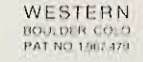
Many different blade-tang stamps were used by Western States Cutlery. From the beginning in 1911 pocket knives were stamped in the tang with a curved "Western States" with "Boulder, Colo." straight across the bottom of the curve. Pocket knives were also etched on the blade with the buffalo trademark from about 1928 to 1940, or the "sharp" trademark from 1920 to 1930. Sometime around 1950 the curved Western States stamp was discontinued on pocket knives and a straight "Western" over a parallel "Boulder, Colo." was adopted. During the 1930's an additional line of pocket knives was marked "Westaco."

From the time of the first sheath knife, about 1928, the word "Western" was stamped in the blade-tang in a straight line with "Boulder, Colo." parallel below. When the double-tang sheath knives appeared the words "pat. pend.," "patented," or "Pat. No. 1,967,479" were added. Most sheath knife stamps noted the patent until about 1950. In the 1930's the company introduced a special line of sheath knives with the trademark "West-Cut."

Two old Western States sheath knives showing the evolution of the curved end-knob.

Pocket knife stamp 1911-1950.

Pocket knife blade etch 1920-1930.



Sheath knife stamp 1931-1950.

Pocket knife blade etch 1928-1940.

Pocket knife No. 06245½ with buffalo trademark etching. Illustration not actual size.

Pocket knife No. 6345½ P with "sharp" trademark etching. Illustration not actual size.

Double tang handle construction patented by Western States.

Company photo, Nov. 1933. Three of these men were still working at "the Cutlery" forty-two years later, in 1975.

Western States pocket knife assembly department in the 1920's.

Western States Knives 1940-1950

Many people develop a certain attachment for old knives that have been with them during special times in their lives. One of the most remembered periods for many individuals has been their time spent in military service. Some still keep the Western States pocket knife they carried in World War II.

Immediately following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Western States Cutlery was assigned the task of producing knives for the armed forces. Most numerous were the camper pocket knives and utility sheath knives which were essential for troops living outdoors, for sailors rigging and cutting lines, or as part of flyers' survival kits. The most unusual knife was the curved, wooden handled, rounded point, floating knife which was designed to help flight crews cut themselves free of entanglements if they were forced to ditch in the ocean.

Knives from this era are readily indentifiable because of material substitutions caused by the national war effort. Sheath knives used iron washers or molded plastic to replace aluminum end-knobs, and plastic or iron substituted for brass in the guards. Nickel silver pocket knife bolsters became iron, and brass plated iron was used for pocket knife scales.

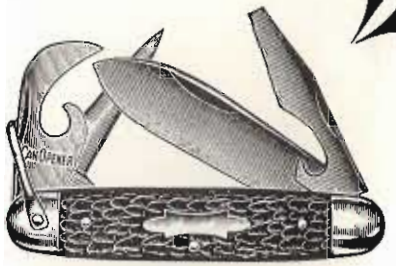
Western States always strove for self-sufficiency, even generating most of its own electric power from 1940 until 1951. Large, heavy-duty diesel generating units operated whenever the plant was working.

During the 1940's the trademark Western in a rope script style replaced the buffalo trademark on packages, catalogues and advertisements. The photograph of the buildings shows this change painted on the wall above the double doors of the shipping room.

Western

Western
QUALITY CUTLERY

Western trademark in rope script design as used by Western States Cutlery Co.



No. 6490 campers pocket knife as supplied to U.S. government in WWII.

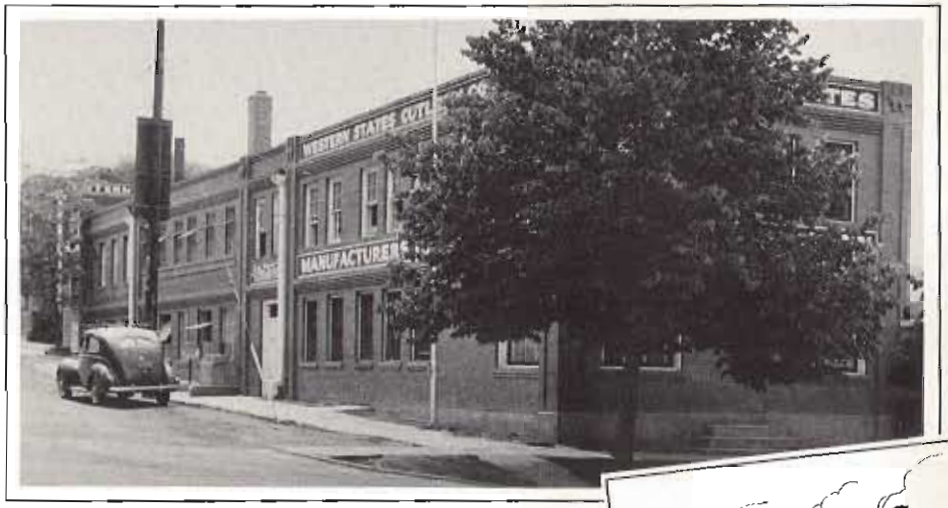
No. L61 utility sheath knife made for the U.S. Navy Seabees. The blade is "blued" for corrosion protection, and iron washer substitutes for end-knob.

Floating knife designed by military for survival kits and rubber rafts. Holes in blade reduced weight.

Engine room with one of the large diesel generating units.

Making pocket knife bolsters on one of the drop hammers at the old Western States plant.

Cleaning sheath knives in the old Western States plant.



Western States Cutlery Co. as the buildings looked in late 1940's. Although railroad line between buildings was removed in 1932 and additions brought the buildings closer together, they were never connected.

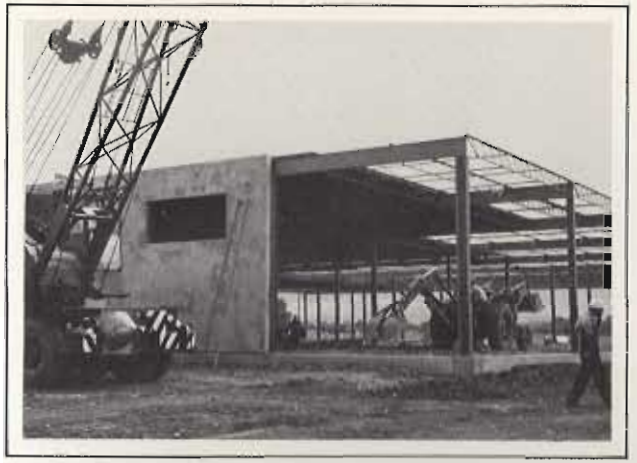
Western Knives 1950-1975

Already the decade of the 1950's is referred to as a part of the old times, and the knives from this period are starting to become collectors items.

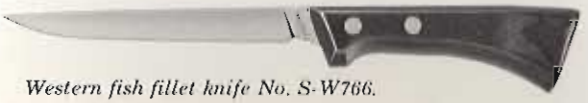
These were significant years for Western States Cutlery Co. Plans were made for many improvements in marketing, products, and manufacturing facilities. In 1953 sales were expanded to cover the entire United States, to service the many inquiries the company was receiving about its products. In 1954 a leather department was established to manufacture sheaths. As distribution expanded, the company name was shortened in 1956 to simply, "Western Cutlery Co." In 1957 operations were moved from the old crowded site in downtown Boulder to a new building on a much larger site in Boulder Industrial Park.

The 1960's saw the introduction of many new products and continued improvement of facilities. The use of animal bone for stag handles ended in 1961 with the introduction of acetal resin stag handles, which have the same appearance but much greater durability. Individual packaging was initiated. The size of Western's building was doubled by additions in 1964 and 1965. This space was used for new equipment and the development of improved production methods. A full line of stainless steel pocket knives and sheath knives was marketed in 1967. A year later Western introduced its first fish fillet knife, which was an immediate success. During the 1960's blade-tang stamps were gradually modified to "Western U.S.A." Some sheath knives and pocket knives with the "West-Cut" brand were produced during these years.

In 1970 a new "Westmark Custom Quality" line of sheath knives was developed and marketed to meet a growing demand for this type of product. It has proved to be a leader in the field and has set new standards for custom quality.

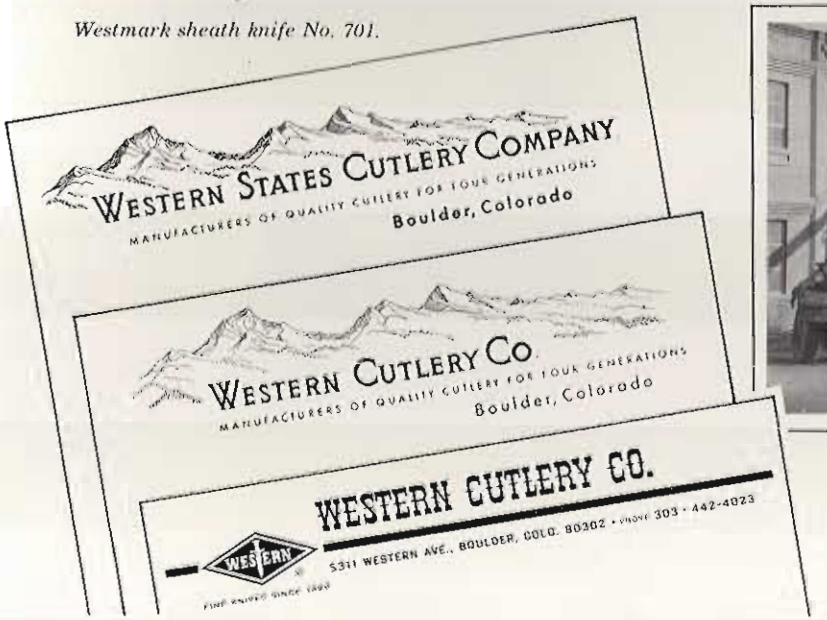


New building under construction summer 1957.



Western fish fillet knife No. S-W766.

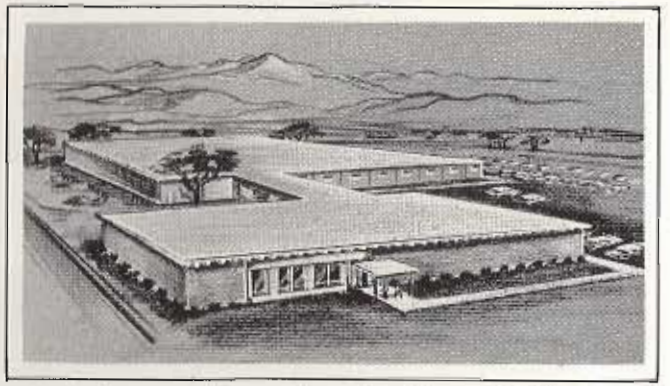
Westmark sheath knife No. 701.



TRADEMARKS:
Western® and Westmark® are registered trademarks of Western Cutlery Co.

WESTERN®

WESTMARK®



Sketch shows new Western plant after additions of 1964 and 1965.

Moving out of the old buildings in December 1957.

TODAY...

Today the traditions and crafts of the past
which produced so many fine quality knives
are being carried on by a
skilled and efficient organization.
Western Cutlery is as proud
to put its brand on its products today
as the company was in generations past,
and looks forward to continuing
these traditions of quality
into the future.

Time out for a group photograph. June 1975.

WESTERN
Fine Knives Since 1896

WESTERN CUTLERY CO.

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PHONE 303-442-4023

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WESTERN